

IN THE CLAIMS:

1.-31. (Cancelled)

32. (Currently amended) A unit for forming a tobacco bead, the unit (1) comprising a forming conveyor (3) for conveying a tobacco bead (2); and a shaving device (21) coordinated with said forming conveyor (3) to remove a surplus tobacco portion (22) off the tobacco bead (2), and comprising two mutually cooperating, rotary shaving disks (23); the unit (1) being characterized in that the shaving device (21) comprises a frame supporting two independent electric motors (32), each of which comprises a respective shaft (29) supporting and operating a the respective ~~said~~ shaving disk (23); and a control unit (38) for activating the two ~~said~~ electric motors (32) to impart a respective given angular speed to each ~~said~~ shaving disk (23).

33. (Currently amended) A The unit as ~~elaimed in of~~ Claim 32, wherein the control unit (38) activates the two ~~said~~ electric motors (32) to impart ~~the a~~ same angular speed to ~~said~~ the shaving disks (23).

34. (Currently amended) A The unit as ~~elaimed in of~~ Claim 32, wherein ~~said~~ the control unit (38) activates the two ~~said~~ electric motors (32) to impart two different angular speeds to ~~said~~ the shaving disks (23).

35. (Currently amended) A The unit as ~~elaimed in~~ of Claim 32, and further comprising a first sensor means for determining ~~the~~ a density of the tobacco in ~~said the~~ tobacco bead (2); ~~said the~~ control unit (38) activating the two ~~said~~ electric motors (32) to impart to each ~~said~~ shaving disk (23) a respective given angular speed which is a function of ~~said the~~ density of the tobacco.

36. (Currently amended) A The unit as ~~elaimed in~~ of Claim 32, and further comprising a second sensor means (41) for determining ~~the~~ a linear travelling speed (VL) of ~~said the~~ forming conveyor (3); ~~said the~~ control unit (38) activating the two ~~said~~ electric motors (32) to impart to each ~~said~~ shaving disk (23) a respective given angular speed which is a function of ~~said the~~ linear travelling speed (VL).

37. (Currently amended) A The unit as ~~elaimed in~~ of Claim 32, and further comprising a third sensor means (40) for determining ~~the~~ a mass of tobacco per unit of length of ~~said the~~ tobacco bead (2); ~~said the~~ control unit (38) activating the two ~~said~~ electric motors (32) to impart to each ~~said~~ shaving disk (23) a respective given angular speed which is a function of ~~said the~~ mass of tobacco per unit of length of ~~said the~~ tobacco bead (2).

38. (Currently amended) A The unit as ~~elaimed in~~ of Claim 32, and further comprising a pressing device ~~(11)~~ for compacting portions (14) of the tobacco bead (2) equally spaced with a given spacing (15); ~~said~~ the pressing device ~~(11)~~ comprising a lobed wheel (11), and a further electric motor (17) for rotating the lobed wheel (11) at a given angular speed (VA).